DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 368 498 PS 022 269

TITLE	Earthquake Preparedness: What Every Childcare Provider Should Know.
INSTITUTION	California State Office of Emergency Services, Sacramento.
SPONS AGENCY	Federal Emergency Management Agency, Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	Dec 92
NOTE	12p.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Child Caregivers; Childhood Needs; Coping; *Day Care Centers; Early Childhood Education; *Earthquakes; Emotional Response; *Family Day Care; Fear; *School Safety
IDENTIFIERS	California; *Child Safety; *Emergency Preparedness

ABSTRACT

This brochure provides information to help child care providers reduce or avoid damage, injuries, or loss of life during earthquakes. It first discusses steps to implement before an earthquake strikes, including securing household contents, and practicing with children how to duck and cover. Next, the brochure describes what to do during an earthquake, when one is indoors, outdoors, or in a car. It then discusses what to do after a quake, including anticipating aftershocks, reassuring the children, and dealing with damaged gas and electrical lines. Helping children and their parents cope with their reactions to a quake is then discussed. The brochure concludes with some special safety tips and a list of sources for additional information. (HTH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

O'ES CALIFORNIA
California Office of Emergency Services

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

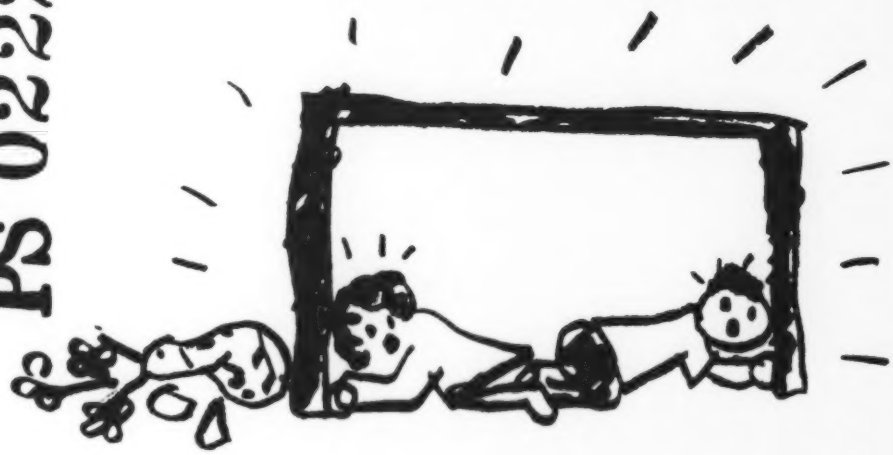
"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Sarah K. Nathe
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

EARTHQUAKE

ED 368 498

PREPAREDNESS

PS 022269



What every childcare provider should know

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Developed by: Bay Area Regional Earthquake Preparedness Project, Governor's Office of Emergency Services, Oakland, California

Design, illustrations & production: Shelley Harper Design

Calligraphy: Nicholas Davis Harper-Smith

NOTE:

The use of the product name "Velcro" in this publication was intended to describe a generic group of fastening products. It is the policy of the State of California *not* to endorse specific products. There are, in fact, a number of products on the market which successfully fasten down small appliances.

The work that provided the basis for this publication was supported by joint funding through a cooperative agreement between the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the State of California Governor's Office of Emergency Services. The recommendations and suggestions included in this document are intended to improve earthquake preparedness, response and mitigation. The contents do not guarantee the safety of any individual, structure or facility in an earthquake. Neither the United states nor the State of California assumes liability for any injury, death or property damage which occurs in connection with an earthquake.

You can never tell when there will be an earthquake, but you can reduce or avoid damage, injuries or loss of life by preparing yourself.

As a licensed child care provider, you already do many things that prepare you for an earthquake. You have a fire extinguisher and the beginning of an emergency and disaster plan. A few other things will help you even more to prepare for an earthquake.

Having a good emergency plan assures parents, and it benefits you directly because your home and family are prepared, too.

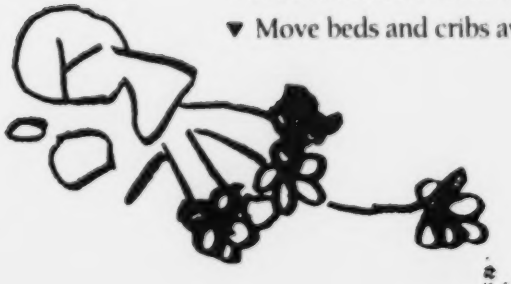
What you can do before an earthquake

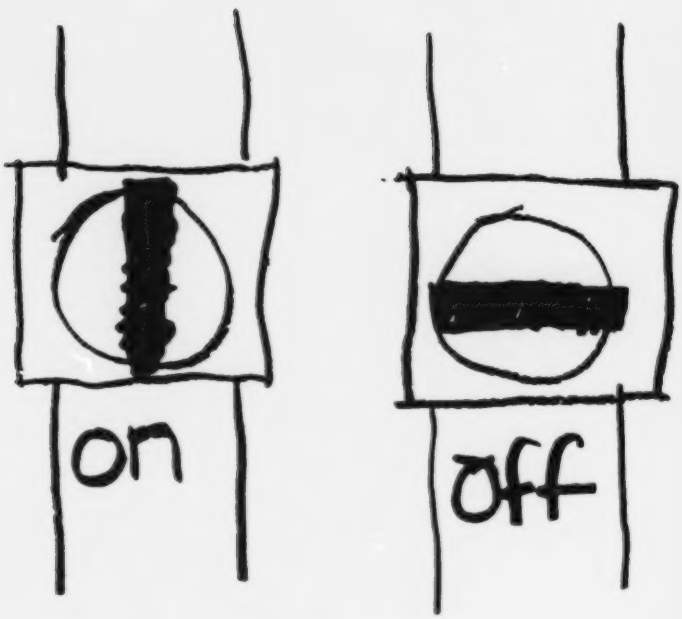
1. Prepare Your House and Its Contents

Much of the damage caused by earthquakes is to the contents of homes. During the shaking, bookcases topple, objects fall out of cabinets, windows shatter, and hanging or large plants fall. You can reduce damage and injuries by removing, moving and fastening, or latching items that are likely to break, fall over or hurt people.

Go through your home, room by room. Standing in the center of each room, look all around you and imagine which objects or pieces of furniture might fall over or fly through the air.

- Move heavy objects to lower shelves
- Attach heavy objects that can't be moved to the desk or table they're sitting on with heavy-duty Velcro
- Fasten bookcases and tall cabinets to the wall
- Move beds and cribs away from windows





Earthquakes can cause other dangerous problems such as broken gas and electric lines. Do you know where the gas "shut-off" valve and master electrical switch are? Do you know how to turn them off? Do you have a wrench close to the gas meter if you need to turn off the gas?

Some houses can stand up to earthquake shaking better than others. In general, wood frame houses that are bolted to their foundations are damaged less than houses not bolted. Houses built after 1960 generally are bolted to their foundations. To find out when your house was built, call your local building department or the county assessor's office.

To make sure that your house is bolted, ask a friend or a builder who knows what to look for.

Call your local Office of Emergency Services and ask for information on identifying earthquake hazards in your home and correcting them. They will also be able to tell you about your city's emergency plan.

"I thought the sky fall down."

Chris, age 3
October 17, 1989
Earthquake

2. Get Children Ready

Children and adults should know how to duck and cover under sturdy pieces of furniture (tables or desks) for protection during earthquake shaking. Spend time explaining what you want them to do. There are books and audiovisual tapes (see Resource List) that will suggest earthquake-related activities for children and help you to explain earthquakes at their developmental level.

3. Have Frequent Drills

To avoid or reduce physical injury, children must learn to respond almost automatically to your commands. Have duck and cover and/or evacuation earthquake drills at least once a month. For a successful drill:

- ▼ Get the children's attention and give clear and distinct commands. Speak in a calm voice. At the command of "earthquake," the children and you should immediately:
  - **Duck** under a desk or table.
  - Stay under **cover** until the shaking stops (at least one minute).
  - If possible, **hold** on to the desk or table leg.
- ▼ If there aren't enough sturdy pieces of furniture to get under, practice taking cover next to inside walls, away from windows, overhead light fixtures and tall pieces of furniture which might topple over when the ground shakes.
- ▼ Practice duck and cover drills outside in your play area, too.

"I was so scared I cried!"

Tammy, age 3
October 17, 1989
Earthquake

4. Talk to Parents

Share your emergency plan with parents. They need to know what you plan to do in an earthquake or any other type of emergency. Ask them to make an earthquake plan for their homes and to talk to their children about earthquake safety.

5. Prepare an Emergency Kit

You may be on your own for two or three days after an earthquake, so it's a good idea to store medical supplies: flashlights, batteries, and a portable radio; food and water; diapers, waterproof plastic bags, and a shovel; and other necessities.

What you can do during an earthquake

1. Everyone should **duck and cover and hold.** Well-trained children and adults will generally do that. Do not move until the shaking stops.

2. If you are outside, stay away from overhead power lines, trees and overpasses. **Duck and cover.**

3. If you are in a car, pull over to the side of the road and stop. Stay away from overhead power lines, trees, and overpasses. Stay in the car until the shaking stops.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

What you can do after an earthquake

Sometimes, large earthquakes are followed by smaller ones, called "aftershocks." These can also cause damage, so be prepared to **duck and cover** again.

1. Check all children and adults for injuries. Treat minor injuries.

2. Check for damage(s):

- If you smell gas, shut it off at the meter. Don't shut off the gas unless you smell it! If you shut off the gas, the gas company must turn it back on. It may take days or weeks before they are able to do so.
- If electric wires are crackling inside, shut off the gas first, then turn off the master electrical switch.
- If there is a small fire that can be put out with the fire extinguisher, do that. Otherwise, leave the house. Remember that you must protect the children and yourself!

3. Reassure the children. Tell them that their parents will come for them as soon as they can, that their parents know everyone will be safe with you, and that you are all together and everyone is fine.

4. If you think that the house and/or its contents are too damaged for the safety of you and the children, leave the house. If you must leave the area, place a note for the parents on the outside door, telling them where you are going.

Children's reactions to earthquakes

Children will usually become frightened, tearful and clinging. They will want their parent(s). Even toilet-trained children may have accidents.

It is natural for children and adults to be afraid.

1. Let the children know that you understand why they are scared. Comfort them, repeat that their parents know where they are or where they may go. Their parents will come to get them as soon as they can. They are safe with you. You will look after them.

2. Encourage the children to talk about their fears. Help them sort out what is real from what is unreal. Encourage them to draw or write about their feelings. Children are less afraid of things that they understand. Return to routine as soon as possible.

3. Parents frequently look to you for advice, so help them understand their children's behavior. Some parents get angry or upset when their children act frightened. Tell the parents that the behavior is natural and will not last. If the child continues to be disturbed for a long period of time, the family may need to seek professional counseling.

"I had lots of bad dreams after."

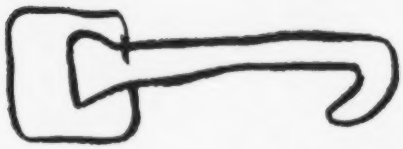
Carlos, age 4
April 25, 1992
Earthquake

Getting started

Are you prepared for an earthquake today? Being prepared will protect you, your home, the children and your business. It is a wise investment. Start now and work on your plan slowly but surely. You don't have to do everything at once, but it's smart to start now.

Special tips

- Industrial-strength Velcro can be used to fasten stereos, computers and other small appliances to a table or desk. It can be purchased at most hardware stores or home supply stores.
- Block the wheels of cribs, playpens or other large objects on wheels to prevent them from rolling around during an earthquake.
- Metal blinds or plastic safety film will help keep large pieces of glass from flying into a room when windows break.
- Child-proof latches or other strong fasteners on cabinet doors will keep contents from spilling out, breaking and hurting children during an earthquake.



L-shaped child-proof latch

Resource list

- **Bay Area Regional Earthquake Preparedness Project**, MetroCenter, 101 8th Street, Suite 152, Oakland, CA 94607.
  Telephone: (510) 540-2713.

  Selection of brochures, videos and general information on earthquake preparedness.

- **Southern California Earthquake Preparedness Project**, 1110 E. Green Street, Suite 300, Pasadena, CA 91106.
  Telephone: (818) 795-9055.

  Selection of brochures and general information on earthquake preparedness.

- **Other Offices of Emergency Services**

  Local and county offices, located under "Government" in front pages of the telephone directory.

  Provide general information about earthquake preparedness and community planning, for example, where the local shelters are located.

- **American Red Cross**

  The local chapter is listed in the telephone directory.

  Provide information about earthquake preparedness and first aid classes.

- **Local Gas and Electric Company**

  Provide information about location of "shut-off" valves for gas and master switch for electric.

- **Telephone Directory**

  Front pages provide information on what to do during an earthquake.

- **Local Child Care Resource and Referral Program**

  Videotape and booklet on earthquake preparedness for child care providers.